

6 Ways

To Keep Your Water Clean:

- 1 Find out more about the watershed or groundwater source supplying your water.
- 2 Be alert to land uses or other activities that could threaten your water supply.
- 3 Never over-fertilize your lawn.
- 4 Regularly get your vehicle inspected for fluid leaks.
- 5 Pick up trash and cover trash bins to prevent litter from blowing into storm drains.
- 6 Find out if environmental and conservation issues are part of your school's curriculum.



United States Department of Agriculture

YOUR HOMETOWN CLEAN WATER TOUR



You and everybody in your hometown depend on water.

But water is like many other things that we depend on—we have to take care of it. How?

You're about to meet some mighty fine folks who'll show you.

But before you say your how-do-you-do's, let's find out how much you already know by taking a "H₂O IQ" quiz...



Leaving grass clippings on your lawn after you mow is a good, natural way to fertilize and minimize use of chemicals that could contaminate water.
True or False



Attracting birds to your home is an excellent way to get rid of pesky insects and minimize use of pesticides that could enter your town's water supply.
True or False



Spreading mulch on your garden keeps the soil moist and saves water.
True or False



A dripping faucet can waste 20 gallons of water a day.
True or False



Everyone lives in a watershed.
True or False



Taking your used motor oil to an oil recycling center is better for your water than dumping the oil down a storm drain.
True or False



A well-managed irrigation system uses water efficiently, saving farmers both water and money.
True or False



When farmers plant seeds without plowing under the stalks and stems of their last crop, rain is less likely to wash the soil away.
True or False



Cleaning junk and litter out of rivers and lakes improves habitat for fish and other aquatic life.
True or False



Planting grass and trees on loose soil and on riverbanks can help keep the soil from washing away.
True or False

If you answered "true" to each of the 10 statements, treat yourself to a great big glass of cold, clear water. But there's still plenty to learn. Get ready! It's time to meet the fine folks of Watertown!



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Helping People Help the Land

Good Water is Good for Everyone.



That's why Everybody in Watertown does everything they can to keep their water clean.
How do they do it? Here are some special people who will show you how.

The Whackers are wacky about their lawn—and clean water, too. That's why after they're through giving their lawn a terrific trim, they don't rake up the clippings. They let the clippings stay where they lay—that fertilizes the grass naturally. That way, they don't use fertilizers that could taint the town's water.



The Finches are wild about birds. That's why they plant flowers and trees that make birds happy. And, in return, the birds put the bite on the nasty insects that drive the Finches buggy. Thanks to their bird buddies, the Finches don't have to use pesticides that could get into Watertown's water.



Here's Major Mulcher working in his garden. He's not in the military, but he does use major amounts of mulch. He knows that mulch keeps the soil moist. Less water on his garden means more water for everybody in Watertown.



Carla believes in taking good care of her car. And she takes good care of Watertown's water, too. When she changes her oil, she doesn't dump her used oil down the drain. She takes her oil to the nearest oil recycling center. Carla thinks that you definitely "auto" try this yourself.



The Pipers aren't drips. They keep a tight handle on their faucets and spigots inside and outside their home. The Pipers know that a dripping faucet or spigot can waste 20 gallons of water a day—enough water for 900 showers a year!



The Waders had a problem with the garden on the hill behind their house. When it rained, all the water ran off the hill and turned their game room into a massive mud puddle. So the Waders built terraces in their garden that let the water soak into the soil. Now they have a real nice hillside garden and they don't have to put on wading boots to play ping pong.



When it comes to conserving water, Farmer Phyllis keeps things under control. She's found a good irrigation system that doesn't waste water and keeps her crops happy and healthy, too. Says Farmer Phyllis, "It may sound corny, but efficient irrigation 'lettuce' run a farm that can't be 'baet'."



Watertown's river and lake are clean now, but they used to be full of junk and litter. Now the folks of Watertown pick up trash whenever they see it and plant trees near the water's edge to keep soil from eroding. Now everyone agrees that the river and lake "shore" look pretty.



No-Till Bill doesn't till the soil on his farm. Instead of tilling (which is the same as plowing), he plants his seeds without plowing under the stalks and stems left over from his last crop. Since he doesn't disturb the soil, it's more likely to stay in place and less likely to be washed away by rain. As No-Till Bill tells his farming friends, "There's no thrill like no-till!"



Chuck the Duck rules the roost here at Watertown Wetland. He knows that people in Watertown do everything they can to keep his home clean. After all, wetlands filter out things that people don't want in their water. Chuck's wetland gives him a nice place to live and plenty of food to eat. No wonder Chuck thinks that caring for water really fills the bill!



People in Watertown know that everybody lives in a watershed. This means that all their water eventually flows down to the river and lake. That's why they do all they can to keep their water clean and pristine.



Everybody in Watertown hopes you had a good visit. And they hope you picked up some pointers that you can use to take good care of the water in your hometown. To learn more about your watershed, contact your local USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service office. You'll find us on the Internet at www.nrcs.usda.gov or in the telephone book under U.S. Government.

